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ABSTRACT

A course organized by the United Kingdom and the University of Liverpool aimed at reviewing research undertaken in European countries, and examining its significance for the practice of adult education in different countries and the possibilities of cooperative action. The three main areas of research identified were: the approach to adult education, the processes of adult education, and the results of adult education. The delegates reached conclusions on the form and contents of a report on European adult education, bibliographical services, general research, research as a joint action, and cooperation and dissemination of information. They asked the Council to act on their suggestions if they were within its competence, recommend action to governments of member states where that was needed, and seek ways of bringing them to the notice of those responsible for the immediate promotion and direction of adult education. [Not available in hardcopy due to marginal legibility of original document.] (NL)

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COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL CO-OPERATION

COMMITTEE FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL EDUCATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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ADULT EDUCATION

THEORY AND PRACTICE

ED038599

Strasbourg, 22 December 1969

COMMITTEE FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL EDUCATION

ADULT EDUCATION IN A CHANGING EUROPE: A SURVEY OF THEORY AND PRACTICE

Study Course organised
by the Government of the United Kingdom
and the University of Liverpool
Liverpool, 8th - 15th July 1969

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C O N T E N T S

PART I :

		Page
	REPORT by Professor Th. Kelly, Director of the Study Course and Mr. E.M. Hutchinson, General Rapporteur	1
I.	Introduction	2
II.	Pre-Course discussions and collection of information	3
III.	The summary report	5
IV.	Additional documentation	7
V.	Conference papers	7
	1. The approach to adult education	8
	2. The processes of adult education	10
	3. The results of adult education	12
VI.	Conclusions and recommendations	13
	Summary of conclusions	15
Appendix :	Recommendations of a Nordic Expert Committee on research within the field of adult education	20

PART II :

	REPORT established after the Study Course by Mr. J. Cardinet, Swiss delegate	22

P A R T I

REPORT

by

Professor Th. Kelly,
Director of the Study Course

and

Mr. E.M. Hutchinson,
General Rapporteur

I. INTRODUCTION

This course is properly seen in the double perspective of the immediate aim of the United Kingdom sponsors and the longer term intentions of the CCC's Committee for Out-of-School Education.

The initiative for its organisation was taken by the Universities Council for Adult Education (Great Britain), following the course promoted for the CCC at Marly-le-Roi by the French Government in 1967 on the general theme "New Trends in Adult Education". Professor T. Kelly, Honorary Secretary of the Universities Council, was a member of the United Kingdom delegation at Marly, and acted on the Council's behalf. It was clear at that time that few of the generalities offered and recorded in the report on the Marly course were supported by concrete evidence. Furthermore, efforts to promote a common European strategy in the development of adult education within the over-riding concept of "education permanente", are vitiated by the absence of common terminologies, lack of elementary statistical and financial information, and mutual ignorance from country to country of significant and possibly relevant experiences. A large part of the conclusions reached by the delegates at the Marly-le-Roi meeting concerned deficiencies in provision for research and enquiry in adult education and in its collation and dissemination among member countries. The United Kingdom Government accepted representations from Professor Kelly, supported by his fellow delegates, that it could make a useful contribution to the programme of the CCC's Committee for Out-of-School Education by mounting a study course in which the past and present state of research and enquiry in European countries could be reviewed and the possibilities of closer collaboration in the future could be explored. From the standpoint of the CCC such a course was welcomed as a natural development of the explorations initiated at Marly-le-Roi and continued in the October 1968 course mounted by the Swiss Government at Rüschlikon on "The concept of adult education in the affluent society: financial aspects". As Mr. Jocher indicated in his opening remarks, it is envisaged that the whole sequence will be preliminary to a major study to be commissioned by the CCC intended to chart the development of adult education on a European basis for a generation ahead.

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In an address presented on behalf of the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Mr. J.D. Carswell, Assistant Under-Secretary of State responsible for Further Education, welcomed the work of the CCC and indicated the sustained interest of the United Kingdom Government in the two main planks of the CCC policy - 'Education Permanente' and Cultural Emancipation. "Both these policies", he said, "imply massive programmes of further and adult education which will attract the mass of people", who, in all countries and in an increasingly complex world, urgently "need to master new techniques of personal and leisure life, from car maintenance to modern parenthood" - as well as the skills of work and citizenship. Much more research is needed into the motivation of students and the emerging pattern of needs. European co-operation in these tasks is vital and has much to contribute to the world at large.

II. PRE-COURSE DISCUSSION AND COLLECTION OF INFORMATION

In his opening address as Director of the course, Professor Kelly summarised the preliminary work undertaken and its relation to earlier meetings. "The greatest achievement of the succession of Council of Europe conferences", he noted, "has been to remind us that, in spite of differences in organisation and in terminology, adult education in all our member countries is serving the same fundamental needs. They are:

- continued basic education (especially important in countries which still have a literacy problem);
- continuing vocational and professional education;
- adult education directed to the rights and responsibilities of citizenship - local, national and international;
- adult education directed to personal culture and enrichment, which some regard as the culmination of all the others and the purpose for which they exist.

The emphasis differs from country to country, and organisation and terminology vary widely, but the more deeply one probes, the more important the similarities become, the less important the differences ..... Once we can achieve some understanding of each other's aims and achievements we can begin to learn from one another."

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When, on the basis of the recommendations of the Marly-le-Roi course, he was invited to act as Director of this new course, continued Professor Kelly, he felt it necessary to obtain some impression of what had already been accomplished by way of research in different countries. For this purpose he corresponded with a number of scholars and practitioners asking to give personal opinions as to the most important pieces of research in adult education undertaken in their respective countries in recent years, and where further research was most needed. From the wealth of information provided in answer to this preliminary enquiry it was possible for the first time to secure at least a rough and imperfect impression of what kind of research was going on.

It now became clear that if the course was not to dissipate its energies, over too wide a field, it would be necessary to restrict the area of research to be covered. It was agreed at a preliminary meeting in London that attention should be concentrated on research of more than local significance in the central area concerned with the actual teaching situation, excluding, for example, national studies of historical and legislative aspects.

The official enquiry addressed to national governments at the end of 1968 was therefore restricted to research under the headings of:

- the approach to adult education
- the processes of adult education
- the results of adult education

with supplementary questions concerning the principal areas in which research is still needed.

The inevitably late submission of some of the excellent responses delayed the production of the preliminary summary report but it had been possible to circulate also some of the major reports received from the national rapporteurs. The summary report (EES (69) Stage 48, 2) provided a preliminary classification of significant examples of research in various countries under the three main headings indicated above.

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III. SUMMARY REPORT

The summary report suggested a delimitation of the field of adult education implicit in the nature of the research reported and in the character of the institutions promoting it. Characteristically it is education sought voluntarily by people above the normal age of completing full-time continuous education in schools, colleges and universities. In general the agencies of provision operate outside the main framework of statutorily provided education or as marginal elements within it. This is not inconsistent with the receipt of financial and other assistance from state or communal authorities.

The traditional concern of adult education has been with personal culture and with civic and social development, but the recent acceptance of the need for extended and renewed vocational education in adult life, and the changing attitudes to the total process of education expressed in the concept of education permanente, are modifying traditional assumptions.

The term "research" is often loosely used. The summary report suggested that a distinction should be drawn between:

- systematic and experimental research
- conceptual and intuitional studies
- descriptive accounts of local activities and innovations.

Of the first the report notes: "In the most rigorous sense, research implies the submission of the hypothesis to the test of experiment in controlled conditions that can be replicated. It is notoriously difficult to undertake research in the behavioural sciences in such terms, and the more usual procedures are those of survey and sampling by the use of interviews and questionnaires, or the testing of matched groups and the evaluation of results by statistical techniques based on probability theory".

The second was defined as "the collation of already available information, historical and contemporary, (which) may reveal general trends and tendencies and the possibilities and limits of the diffusion of experience."

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The third covers descriptive and didactic writing, including journal articles, memoranda, official reports, annual and other periodical reviews of the work of various agencies. Although not constituting research in any strict sense, such information is immediately valuable if known to practitioners. It is also the basis for studies of the second type indicated above and is suggestive of needs and problems that can only be met and resolved by systematic and experimental research.

The summary report suggested a tentative classification of examples of reported research and studies by reference to the first two of these categories distinguished as Types A and B. The three main areas of research identified for consideration in the course were extended as follows:

<u>The Approach to Adult Education</u>

- Environment and sociological background
- Public attitudes to adult education
- Needs, interests and motives of adult students.

<u>The Processes of Adult Education</u>

- Adult learning
- Teaching methods
- Communication theory
- Group dynamics
- Programmed learning

<u>The Results of Adult Education</u>

The small amount of research into evaluation reported did not provide a basis for sub-division of this heading.

The works chosen as exemplary under these headings are listed in the summary report but they are not repeated here since it is a primary recommendation of the delegates that a working party should be constituted to examine and classify all the information submitted for the course so that a full bibliography can be produced as early as possible. (See Summary of Conclusions and Recommendations, 2 (A)).

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IV. ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

In extension of the summary report, the national reports from Austria, Denmark and the Federal Republic of Germany (EES (69) Stage 48,2 Addendum 1) and from France (EES (69) Stage 48,2 Addendum 2) were distributed to delegates. The Norwegian delegate submitted in manuscript "An annotated list of recent researches in Norway in the field of adult education" and a statement of "Subjects on which further research seems to be urgently needed".

Professor Bonacina provided a general survey of provision for adult education in Italy (1), and Dr. Meissner added to the report from the Federal Republic of Germany, a paper on "Experience with group dynamics in adult education" in that country.

Delegates also had available the reports resulting from the preceeding study courses in France and Switzerland noted earlier, and other recent publications of the CCC.

V. CONFERENCE PAPERS

Against this background of prepared reports, papers were presented relating to the three main areas of research identified for consideration by the delegates.

The following notes of a few of their salient points are included as a small indication of the range and substance of work already in progress.

These presentations elicited vigorous and sustained discussion which revealed the many different circumstances in which research is in fact being promoted in different countries by national centres of adult education, e.g. in the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom; by University Departments of Institutes of adult education, e.g. in Austria, Finland, France and the United Kingdom; by single adult education organisations, e.g. in France and Germany.

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(1) Professor Bonacina delivered a valuable address in which he reviewed the changes in post-war Italian society which call imperatively for new thought and action in adult as in all other sectors of education.

1. The Approach to Adult Education

Mr. Pierre Besnard (Department of Educational Science, University of Paris) opened a discussion on the sociological foundations of adult education, suggesting that consideration of students' needs, the appropriateness of programmes and the teaching resources available to service them must be related to an overall assessment of the characteristics of "the coming post-industrial society". He believed that efforts in planning and research would lack direction unless they were related to a hypothesis about probable developments in the next twenty years formulated from the study of present and past experience.

Specific attempts to obtain evidence as to public attitudes to adult education and clearer information about the interests and motives of actual and potential students were described by Dr. Amberg (Switzerland), Dr. Meissner (Federal Republic of Germany), and Mr. Hutchinson (United Kingdom).

Dr. Meissner outlined the main conclusions of the enquiries by Schulenberg (Ansatz und Wirksamkeit der Erwachsenenbildung, 1957) and Strzelewicz, Raapke, Schulenberg (Bildung und Gesellschaftliches Bewusstein, 1966) indicating that, on the whole, adult education students were the younger element, came from the higher social groups, had had better schooling and lived in the larger urban communities. Sixty per cent considered that the VHS should concentrate on vocational studies as against fourteen per cent who thought the main emphasis should be on personal enrichment.

Dr. Amberg and Mr. Hutchinson described the methods of interview and questionnaire adopted in enquiries currently in progress in their respective countries. In both cases comparisons were being attempted between the responses of enrolled students and samples of the general population.

There is a broad similarity of intention between the sponsors of these enquiries, and those of similar ones in, for example, France and Austria. Technical problems concerning the relative value and comparative costs of interviews and questionnaire as methods of obtaining information and the necessity for pilot studies, arise in all countries. In terms of purpose, content and method there would be evident advantages in closer working relations between those concerned.

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Senorita Alonso (Spain) referred to enquiries concerning the conditions of successful literacy education for adults. The motivation of adults at this level is very difficult to determine, particularly for people beyond the age of 45 who imagine that they can never learn. Teaching must be functional and directly related to daily life (as recommended by UNESCO). Adults want immediate results and a learning situation that is pleasant, rapid and useful.

In Spain the Minister of Labour is responsible for vocational education and the Minister of Education and Science for cultural education. It is necessary to make a careful choice of content of cultural education, so that it will respond to essential needs.

Mr. Oeconomo (France) described studies undertaken by the "Institut National pour la Formation des Adultes" (I.N.F.A.) in relation to the work of the "Centre Universitaire de Coopération Economique et Sociale" (C.U.C.E.S.) of Nancy, with workers in the iron-ore area of Lorraine facing rapid redundancy. In 1964 the C.U.C.E.S., in seeking to help mine workers to acquire new working qualifications, accepted the principle that decisions concerning the choice of tutors, contents of programmes and practical requirements should only be made in collaboration with those immediately concerned. Experimental work over two years up to 1966 led to a programme involving 500 workers from 12 mines. By 1969 the numbers involved had risen to 1,500. Without question, Mr. Oeconomo asserted, the essential motivation was the acquisition of new vocational qualifications, but this was not inconsistent with concern for personal development and the men's wish to match the educational standards of their better educated children. The unconditional acceptance by trade unions of the bona fides of the C.U.C.E.S. had been necessary to overcome resistance to "return to school", and distrust of educational work approved by management. The undoubted success of a scheme previously unfamiliar in France had made it in a true sense a pilot action.

An attempt, with the active support of representatives of workers and management, to involve 500 miners from two areas notified for closure of mines in a year's time met with little success. A study by the I.N.F.A. demonstrated the superiority of individual and group interviews as compared with questionnaires in revealing the tensions underlying this disinterest.

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Far from being stimulated by the knowledge of impending redundancy to prepare themselves for change, the men were totally inhibited from interest in any kind of education that was not obviously relevant to their immediate "bread and butter".

Mr. Oecomono dealt also with the complex of educational possibilities implied by the requests of miners' wives for instruction in dress-making, and with attempts over a period of five years to find the best way of introducing adults to statistical thinking and probability theory. Preliminary three-day seminars encouraging free discussion as a means of disencumbering people of erroneous pre-formed knowledge had proved valuable.

2. The Processes of Adult Education

Current approaches to research in this sector were illustrated in papers from Mr. G.H. Jamieson, Mr. C.D. Legge, and Professor E.G. Wedell (all of the United Kingdom).

Mr. Jamieson (Audio-Visual Aids and Programmed Learning Unit, University of Liverpool) described an experiment in the comparison of learning "binary number" by programmed and guided discovery methods at different age levels.

The topic was chosen because it is meaningful, can be taught in a comparatively short time and can be marked objectively. It is also relatively easy to find subjects of various ages to whom it is new. Girls and women from four groups (mean ages 11, 21 41 and 57) were randomly assigned in equal numbers to the two different modes of learning.

Test results demonstrated that among the variables contributing to successful learning of binary number, established arithmetical ability was more important than age. The youngest and oldest groups learned significantly better by the guided discovery methods "perhaps because they had not developed an independent learning style with which to come with the teaching machine". There was a significant positive relationship between age and learning time. This is in line with other findings that older students tend to be at a disadvantage if tested on times based on standards obtained from young adults; if some flexibility is allowed in completion time, older students appear to have more to gain. Older students in this enquiry were no more conservative than their younger counterparts in their preferences for new methods.

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Mr. C.D. Legge referred in particular to experiments conducted by McLeish (University of Cambridge) in attempts to measure the effectiveness of the lecture method in adult education. These involved exposure of matched groups for different periods, with immediate and delayed recalled tests of retention of information. On immediate recall, retention was assessed as 42% and after one week as 17%, with no significant difference as between groups with different exposure periods. Individual scores differed from 28% to 70% on immediate recall. Later experiments attempted to differentiate between motivated and non-motivated groups and to assess the effect of prior reading of the lecture script. Readers had higher test scores than non-readers on immediate recall, but not on delayed recall tests. Motivation (as tested) had no significance. So far as attitudes are concerned, lecturing as a method was disliked by a majority. Preferences appear to be associated with deeply rooted personality traits, lectures being preferred by students more oriented towards tradition and authority.

The speaker noted that, despite criticisms, lecturing is probably the most commonly used method of teaching in adult education, and research is therefore of special importance; its effectiveness for conveying information depends greatly on the views and attitudes of students, but there may be other values, e.g. stimulus to personal learning outside the lecture room, or conformity with student expectations.

Professor Wedell described the study of correspondence as an educational method conducted by Mr. R. Glatter (University of Manchester). This was a large survey making use of questionnaires, 20,000 of which were distributed to students enrolling with various correspondence colleges, at the time of their enrolment. A retrospective study was also carried out for which 49% of the distributed questionnaires were returned. Information was obtained about personal characteristics and engagement in other forms of part-time study.

Important conclusions are: the dominant student motive is to obtain a specific qualification; correspondence study is a preferred method and not merely a substitute because of distance from classes, etc.; drop-outs are large in number but not materially larger than in other forms of part-time education for equivalent purposes; and the standards achieved are comparable, if people complete courses, to those of people learning by other methods.

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3. The results of adult education

Mr. G. van Enckevoort (staff member of the Netherlands Centre for Adult Education) reviewed recent and continuing evaluation research in the Netherlands. It is important, he suggested, to distinguish between the evaluation of cognitive learning and the evaluation of skill and attitude changes. Evaluation by examinations, as commonly practised, may be adaptable to some forms of adult education, e.g. lectures and discussions, where cognitive learning is most in question.

Evaluation research should not be confused with participation research, which has wider objectives, nor should satisfaction as reported by students be confused with objective assessment of results. The purpose of evaluation research is quite simply to determine the extent to which the objectives of a programme have been achieved, and the central problem is to devise standardised instruments of evaluation that can be used by those actually conducting courses. So far, such research has been pursued principally in vocational education and in management training.

Referring to work done in the Netherlands by Van de Ban, Wanries, Van Praag and Van Enckevoort, Doerbeeker, Broring and Erkamp, the speaker distinguished between:

- the assessment of goals, which demands and imposes a greater clarification of objectives;
- the development of instruments, which must not only be characterised by objectivity, validity and reliability, but must also be sensitive enough to discriminate between the responses of the same individual at different times, as well as between different individuals at the same time;
- research design, which requires provision for a long time sequence and a recognition of ways in which experimental and real life situations differ;
- interpretation of results

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The speaker did not consider that the conclusions reached in these experimental researches, e.g. in regard to leadership training, and the relative values of residential and non-residential courses, had been unambiguous, but they had values in practice, for example, for clarification of objectives, better programme planning, reconsideration of methods, closer identification of leaders with the purposes of their employing agencies, encouragement of self-criticism.

The speaker concluded by warning of possible negative aspects of research: because it is a long-term process the response may be to justify resistance to change, to delay action and to postpone decision making.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As a preliminary to the preparation of their conclusions and recommendations, the delegates were informed by Mr. Egil Nilsen (Norway) of an important study of research needs in the field of adult education carried out by an expert committee of the Nordic Cultural Commission and received a paper from Mr. G.H.L. Schouten (Netherlands - Secretary, European Bureau of Adult Education) on "Research still waiting to be done".

The recommendations of the Nordic Expert Committee are so much a microcosm of the wider European situation that they are included as Appendix to this report.

Mr. Schouten reviewed future needs under four headings:

- the elaboration and extension of research, as revealed in this course, already undertaken or planned, related to the work of existing organisations and patterns of adult education in different countries;
- the development, similarly, of research into new possibilities of adult education associated with the concept of education permanente;
- the organisation of multi-disciplinary teams implying close collaboration between academic specialists and professional adult educators;
- the possibility afforded by the cultural relationship of European countries, for the organised circulation of information and co-ordination of research.

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For the preparation of conclusions and recommendations three working groups were constituted to consider:

Group 1

The preparation of a general review of European adult education - possible joint projects.

Group 2

Recommendations in the light of the course at Marly-le-Roi and of Mr. Schouten's paper as to the most immediately important topics (a) within the limits adopted for this course (b) in relation to other aspects of adult education.

Group 3

Arrangements for the regular interchange of information on research and current developments.

The findings of the working groups, as consolidated by the general rapporteur, were discussed in the final plenary session and, subject to the amendments incorporated in the conclusions as now presented, were unanimously adopted as the recommendations of the study course.

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SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

The purposes of the course were to review the researches and enquiries undertaken in European countries, their significance for the practice of adult education in different countries and the possibilities of co-operative action in the future.

The delegates reached the following conclusions and ask the Council of Europe:

(a) to act on them if they are within its own competence;

(b) to recommend action by governments of member states where this is needed;

(c) to seek ways of bringing them to the notice of those responsible, in each country, for the immediate promotion and direction of adult education.

1. A general review of European adult education

This needed review should take the form of a book (1) containing:

(a) a description of current provision in separate European countries;

(b) a comparative study of the problems encountered and means adopted for their solution.

A working group of practitioners should advise on the collection of information for (a) above. The comparative study ((b) above) should be remitted to a general editor with the guidance of a small editorial board.

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(1) It is suggested that without rigidly adhering to it, regard should be paid to the scheme adopted for the essay in comparative adult education published by the Center for the Study of Liberal Education for Adults (U.S.A.) known as The Exeter Papers, being a report of the First International Conference on the Comparative Study of Adult Education (1967).

2. Bibliographical services

Practical exchange of experience and development of research related to it, on a European level, require improvements in bibliographical services. In particular:

(a) A working party, including representatives of the main European language groups, should be constituted to examine and classify the information submitted for this study course. The intention should be to prepare, within one year, a classified bibliography of European studies within the field defined for the purposes of the course, i.e. the approach to adult education, the processes of adult education and the results of adult education.

(b) The working party so constituted should also have regard to the possibility of securing an agreed classification and terminology that could be extended to wider areas of research.

(c) The same working party or a similar one should advise, in the light of initiatives already taken nationally and internationally, on the practical arrangements needed to establish for field workers a European service of abstracts of periodical and occasional literature.

(d) Two documents should be prepared in each country, for national use and as a contribution to European co-operation, viz:

(i) an annotated bibliography with provision for periodical supplements;

(ii) an annual survey of research and development.

3. Research - General

(a) Systematic enquiry and research is needed to give practical effect to the concept of education permanente.

(b) Research in adult education must be undertaken in the context of its relatedness to other levels and sectors of education and to other fields of social and cultural activities.

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(c) Research organisations, at present concentrating on other sectors of education, e.g. school systems or higher education, should be made aware of the importance of adult education in a comprehensive system of provision.

(d) When multi-disciplinary teams are constituted nationally or internationally for the study of particular aspects of adult education, practising adult educators should have a leading role.

4. Research - Joint action

To encourage co-operative research, the Council of Europe should:

(a) study the proposals for joint research projects already made by the Nordic Council's Committee of Adult Education experts;

(b) convene meetings of specialists, including practising adult educators, to plan common action research projects in different countries for the comparative evaluation of methods, settings and contents of programmes;

(c) establish one or more working parties to make proposals for:

(i) a common basis in European countries for the collection and publication of essential statistics;

(ii) the joint planning and conduct of research in specific fields, in particular:

- the relationship between adult education and socio-economic development;
- the use and effects of mass media in adult education;
- curriculum design;
- evaluation procedures;
- legislation and financial provision.

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5. Co-operation and dissemination of information

(a) Because of the varieties of agencies involved in adult education, co-operation within countries is a pre-requisite of effective international co-operation.

The delegates reaffirm the recommendations of many previous international meetings that there should be in each country a recognised and adequately financed national institution to encourage co-operation between all adult education agencies and to collect, collate and disseminate information.

Delegates welcome the reported recent establishment or strengthening of such institutions in Finland, Holland, Ireland, Sweden and Switzerland parallel to the established national institutes in the United Kingdom.

(b) Such institutions should help the Secretariat of the Council of Europe by (i) pressing state member governments to release information and material emanating from the Committee for Out-of-School Education, widely and speedily, and (ii) identifying the people in the field who need and will use it if they are informed about it.

(c) The delegates recognise the importance of the European Bureau of Adult Education as a non-governmental agency of co-operation working in alignment with the Committee for Out-of-School Education of the Council of Europe.

The Council is asked to give full assistance to the Bureau in terms of finance and status.

Delegates accept the responsibility of seeking greater support for the Bureau within their own countries.

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(d) The Council of Europe, national governments and employing bodies are urged to recognise the importance of personal meetings of practitioners and to make financial provision for them. Special help should be given to younger and less experienced workers.

(e) Delegates welcome the financial assistance offered by the Council of Europe towards the travel costs of exchange visits of adult educators. They ask the European Bureau of Adult Education, national governments and national agencies for co-operation to publicise more effectively the terms on which assistance is available.

(f) Delegates consider that it would now be useful to hold larger meetings of European adult educators and ask the Council of Europe and the European Bureau of Adult Education to take the initiative in promoting periodical European congresses of adult education.

Delegates wish to emphasise that the productive work of this study course can only be developed on the lines of these conclusions if governments make the necessary financial provision for the work of national and international agencies.

A P P E N D I X

Recommendations from a report to the Nordic Cultural Commission from the Nordic Expert Committee on Research within the field of adult education. The report and the recommendations are at present being dealt with by different authorities in the Scandinavian countries.

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1. Future co-operation in the field of adult education will require:

   (a) Establishment of special centres for adult education research, documentation and teaching in each of the Scandinavian countries staffed by research workers, statisticians, consultants, teachers in adult education and in the psychology of adults. Scholarship holders should be attached to the centres.

   (b) Twice-yearly inter-Scandinavian meetings of specialist groups, e.g. research workers, statisticians, consultants and teachers in adult education and in the psychology of adults, for the exchange of experiences. Inter-specialist group meetings should assemble annually. Scholarship holders should be exchanged for shorter or longer periods.

   Until such centres are established, an equivalent exchange of experiences and mutual meetings for the Scandinavian research workers in this field should be ensured. In any event, scholarship should be established as soon as possible.

2. The Committee suggests that the following concrete research projects be given priority and be realised on a Scandinavian basis:

   (a) A description and a comparative analysis of the organisation and structure of adult education in the Scandinavian countries.

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(b) An interview/questionnaire study of a sample from the adult population in the Scandinavian countries, to demonstrate the difference between participants in the various forms of adult education and the differences between them and non-participants, to ascertain, among other things, the motives for and the obstacles to participation.

(c) A more thorough analysis of participants, leaders and teachers within one or more forms of adult education in the Scandinavian countries, in order to illustrate more clearly the problems of recruitment and drop-out.

(d) A historical-comparative analysis of study-groups as a method in adult education in order to illustrate, among other things, the process of innovation and diffusion.

These four projects will be discussed in greater detail in part 2 of the report, where a plan of execution will be proposed and a cost estimate made.

3. The Committee suggests that figures about the various forms of adult education be included in the current official education statistics of the individual countries, and that those responsible for such statistics be requested to co-operate on a Scandinavian basis so that comparisons can be made.

4. The Committee suggests that preliminary steps be taken in research on a Scandinavian basis in connection with the aims and objectives, choice of topic and content as well as methodological problems. Both research workers and active leaders in adult education in the Scandinavian countries should be drawn into such a preliminary study.

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P A R T II

REPORT

established after the Study Course
by Mr. J. Cardinet, Swiss delegate

I. The aim of the course and its organisation

This course was the third in a series on adult education organised by the Council of Europe, which selects a different topic in this field each year. It is hoped that when collated, the results of the experts' work will enable a comprehensive book to be published on the present situation and the possible developments of this type of education in Europe. The topic for this year was research on adult education.

Each European country sent two representatives, and the greater part of the week was spent in exchanging information on research in each country, its methods and results. Written material was also available.

II. Present achievements in adult education

1. Scope

"Adult Education" covers four very different types of activity:

(a) basic education, in particular the campaign for literacy, school-revision courses, secondary education by correspondence or television, the open university - in short all the courses that duplicate existing scholastic training but are available to working adults;

(b) vocational further training, in particular all the courses given by firms, individually or jointly, or even those at the university (under special agreements, in England) or organised by private associations. The content of these courses tends to broaden into general education and cultural training;

(c) education on civic rights and duties, particularly training given by trade unions, political parties, social and religious movements, schools for parents;

(d) education aiming at culture and personality development, such as people's universities, leisure-activity clubs, sports associations, dramatic societies, cinema clubs etc.

2. Development

Over the past ten years the campaigns for literacy (relying on television and local discussion groups meeting out of school) have fully attained their objectives in

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Italy and Spain and are virtually finished. On the other hand, the attempts to have work done at home that is ordinarily done in school are meeting with great difficulty at the higher levels. The public, in England and in Germany, seem motivated today primarily by vocational reasons, whereas in the early days of the adult education movements in these countries there was rather a disinterested desire for culture. In France and Italy the movements are more recent and aim at comprehensive education, including the development of a critical attitude towards present-day society.

III. General concepts of adult education

The variety of aims and trends mentioned above explains why, at the present time, there is such a range of forms of training between two extremes.

1. Vocation v. Culture

- Adult education was originally conceived as a means whereby the working classes could acquire one of the bourgeois luxuries: culture. In many circles it continues to provide this counterweight for the dehumanisation of labour, in particular among those who suspect that the vocational training introduced in industry today conceals further exploitation of man. These groups thus tend to reject training for economic aims.

- However, many reasons lead to reconciliation of these two poles. First, it is often impossible to distinguish between vocational and non-vocational motives; one may attend a course in statistics for one's work and discover a new way of thinking and a new way of posing problems that is pre-eminently cultural; conversely, general culture is essential to the key staff. Furthermore, it seems that work should be able to provide man's fulfilment, and vocational training can enrich this essential plane of his life. More and more, knowledge is going to become the real capital, the lever of power and, to make social stratification less rigid, it is essential to provide means of vocational training in the course of one's career.

- The generally accepted educational strategy is thus to satisfy the desires of pupils at the vocational level but at the same time to make them aware of the other dimensions of personality development that are equally desirable.

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2. Integration v. Protest

- In general adult education was originally conceived as a means of making up for deficiencies so that the less well-educated adult might be familiarised with the culture and ideology prevailing in society. Considerable emphasis was laid on civic participation, but often with a conservative aim: to ensure the integration of under-privileged social classes into society as it stood. This kind of adult education is called "social hypocrisy" by some sociologists, who think that, on the contrary, the culture to be disseminated should be conceived as an instrument of mental liberation. It should help the individual to defend himself against the excessive pressures of mass-media, publicity and the groups of which he forms a part. It should develop his critical attitude rather than seek to mould him into predetermined cultural patterns, longstanding and therefore weak.

- Moreover, in the post-industrial culture towards which we are heading, the constant shifting of values (scientific, aesthetic and ethical) will mean that attachment to a petrified culture will be impossible. It is the constant striving after innovation that should be taught - not conformism.

- Thus, there is agreement on the idea of developing the individual's independence of judgment and his open-mindedness towards change and continued progress.

3. Institutions v. Spontaneity

- In matters of adult education we are now at the stage where Europe was with primary education at the beginning of the 19th century; private institutions are feeling their way but are only partially satisfying the needs. There was a great temptation to follow the model of public education and to have the state create the courses desired, in the form of adult schools.

- However, this position could not be defended, for the inevitable unwieldiness of the great social organisations must be avoided. And also those who had not been able to adapt themselves to school must be reached in some other way.

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- In seeking new forms of study appropriate for adults, techniques were developed of group discussion, experimental laboratories and reading clubs, all forms that would allow of lively interaction with maximum spontaneity. The younger generation rebel against programmes imposed from above, orders by "movements" and work programmes suggested from outside which could not be equally meaningful to all students.

- The conflict between the institutionalisation necessary for the masses and the permanence of educational activity and, on the other hand, spontaneous participation and the independence of each working group could perhaps be resolved if, as intended in Belgium, all the existing groups for further education - from the trade unions down to local independent groups - could be linked together.

4. Book learning v. Experience from life

- Associated with the above problem, a new concept of learning became apparent. The traditional school, it was said, taught the child to absorb ideas mechanically, relying on his submissiveness. It was a case of cramming his memory more often than moulding his judgment. His knowledge was purely book learning.

- With the adult, on the other hand, any learning must be relevant if the pupil is not going to give up. The ideas presented must be directly linked with his motives, and generally even with some concrete activity. This is how he assimilates the ideas put before him and truly enriches his experience. His knowledge is from life.

- This contra-distinction finds powerful support in the ideas of Rogers, the American psychotherapist, who proposed the concept of a non-directive form of teaching, centred on the pupil, which provided for the development of the pupil's personality rather than his knowledge. According to him, anything that could be taught was not worth learning.

- Does Rogers' anti-intellectualism provide the antidote to scholastic temptation, or does it harbour the danger of an exclusive appeal to intuition? Perhaps vocational training needs more rigid frameworks for awarding the diplomas demanded by the pupils concerned.

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IV. The ideal of permanent education

1. A comprehensive culture

The variety of forms of training from which the adult can benefit has gradually revealed "a concept of culture ultimately richer than that commonly admitted. It stresses the training of man as a whole, not only its intellectual and aesthetic aspects; but also his economic and social development, his psychological and sociological culture which make possible better relationships with those around him". (R. Labourie: L'éducation permanente, tâche du 20e siècle, in "Vers la Vie Nouvelle", 65/9 supplément).

2. Continued development

Becoming an adult is a perpetual and unfinished battle, for throughout his life, including his old age, man is beset by new problems. To face up to them he must learn, he must adjust and develop. He cannot stand still.

3. Collective advancement

"This education has its origin in a desire to transform the world and society so as to embody in them the best chances of human progress by means of collective advancement. That is why this permanent education is seen as an involvement in social realities (basic cells or large groups) and in the great man phenomena of the present time. Permanent education must embrace collective reality". (R. Labourie, op. cit.).

4. The inner life

Group education is not enough: the members of the group must themselves have an integrated personality. It is necessary that the various elements of their culture can be structured, that a system of stable value should give them sufficient inner coherence. For this, the individual must choose, in relation to a particular image of himself, a plan, a faith, a picture of his place in the world. Permanent education should merge into a teaching of the inner life. This philosophy generally accords with that of those responsible for adult education in Western Europe and allows of a kind of reconciliation, at an idealistic level, of the divergent concepts of adult education already mentioned.

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V. Problems to be solved and the scientific research involved

Achieving adult education presupposes, first that adults wish to be educated, that there are bodies to fulfil this wish and that the educational methods used are effective. Papers have been read on these three points during the course. They aimed at describing the scientific research able to guide future action in these fields. It is difficult to summarise these somewhat diversified contributions.

1. Motivation in adults

- Individual motives may be conscious or unconscious; they may be induced by an ideology or by the more direct influence of environment.

- German surveys have been described and compared with those in England and Switzerland. All put vocational motives as the prime reason for adults attending courses. But the discussion has shown that there are several levels of motivation and that the subjects often confuse the satisfaction obtained from the course with their reasons for enrolling. The scientific methodology of these surveys is still unsatisfactory.

- Motives related to an ideology, or an environment, have been closely studied - by interviews within surveys undertaken by INFA at Briey, on the occasion of the collective refusal by miners to undergo training for their vocational regrading.

2. Organisation of adult education

The National Institute for Adult Education (England and Wales) has carried out research into the means of training publicly available in seven representative areas of England.

Over and above the survey of the motives of students and of a control group, the investigators established a set of criteria for evaluating each programme. Another survey is a project to relate the observable characteristics of meetings and the activity of students, taken as an intermediate criterion for apprenticeship.

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3. Methods

- Research on methods is fuller but more disparate.

- A study comparing a programmed course and the "guided discovery method" was presented by its author, who concluded that a generalisation of principles was easier for pupils who had discovered those principles for themselves. However, this investigation does not permit of judgment being passed on programmed education in general.

- A book was recently published on the lecture method. It appears that, on average, 40% of information imparted was retained by the students at the end of the lecture and 17% a week later. Taking notes did not improve memorising, but rather the contrary.

- An investigation of teaching by correspondence showed that it is as effective as ordinary teaching in certain circumstances. It is the various indirect didactic approaches that influence the sampling of subjects that often lead to its being considered inferior. The time needed to complete such a course is 2-3 times that usually put into another course. The pupils appreciate being able to work alone and at home. In 60% of cases they enrol even though they could attend a school.

4. The effects of the education given

The comparison of the methods and the administrative structure of education presuppose that there are instruments for measuring changes in the capacity and attitudes of pupils. Much research remains to be done in this field.

VI. Conclusion - the unity of educational problems

Just as it has been beneficial for education to free itself from school routines in order to meet the needs of adults as best it can, so it would be a pity not to let formal education reap the benefit of the discoveries thus made. If it is recognised, for example, that adults need to know why they learn something, if they must have a short-term target, all the more should this principle be applied to children. From now on, university teaching in particular should be considered as adult teaching. The claims of students are very close to those already mentioned (the same aspirations can be seen in young people in secondary schools).

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Moreover, it is not only from the point of view of methods that a break should be avoided. In syllabuses also there must be co-ordination, as England in particular has shown us with its part-time studies and its open university.

Lastly, from the point of view of equipment we should certainly reach more rational solutions if we provided schools, sports facilities, etc., with a view to their continuous use - the mornings for children, the afternoons for mothers with their young children and the evenings for other adults.

The whole of social life could be reconstructed around appropriate cultural establishments where everyone, in villages and in each district of towns, could find a stimulus to creativity, exchange of views and discussion and an opportunity to serve the community.

In the development of present day society there seems to be unco-ordinated pursuit of human contact within small groups. Doubtless it is an attempt to restructure and humanise the masses in the large cities, inhuman environment though they be. To afford this need the means of crystallising in cultural centres would certainly be to resolve one of the most important problems of our time: that of the integration of individuals into a social community fit for them.

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on Adult Education